SAVANT RECORDS INC.

PAUL BOLLENBACK
BYRON LANDHAM
with guest artist
WAYNE ESCOFFERY

PAT BIANCHI

Something to Say

THE MUSIC OF STEVIE WONDER

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1. GO HOME 4:44
(S. Wonder) (Black Bull Music Inc. / Jobete Music Co. Inc.) ASCAP

2. UNTIL YOU COME BACK TO ME (THAT'S WHAT I'M GONNA DO) 5:23
(S. Wonder / M. Broadnax / C. Paul) (Black Bull Music Inc. / Jobete Music Co. Inc. / Sawandi Music / Stone Agate Music) ASCAP / BMI

3. SUPERSTITION 7:18
(S. Wonder) (Black Bull Music Inc. / Jobete Music Co. Inc.) ASCAP

4. MOON BLUE 6:22
(S. Wonder / A. Busia) (Steveland Morris Music) ASCAP

5. ISN'T SHE LOVELY 5:06
(S. Wonder) (Black Bull Music Inc. / Jobete Music Co. Inc.) ASCAP

6. IF IT'S MAGIC 5:52
(S. Wonder) (Black Bull Music Inc. / Jobete Music Co. Inc.) ASCAP

7. SOMETHING TO SAY 4:54
(S. Wonder / L. Hardaway / D. Hunter / P. Riser) (Jobete Music / Sawandi Music / Stone Agate Music) ASCAP / BMI

8. JUST CALLIN' 4:32
(P. Bianchi) (Pat Bianchi Music) BMI

9. RIBBON IN THE SKY 2:19
(S. Wonder) (Black Bull Music Inc. / Jobete Music Co. Inc.) ASCAP

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Pat Bianchi has created and recreated stunning performances of Stevie Wonder's songs in mind boggling interpretations and arrangements. I especially enjoyed "Go Home" and "Superstition" with dynamite saxophone player Wayne Escoffery, the straight out swinging and grooving interpretation of "Isn't She lovely", and the up tempo fire and brimstone arrangement of "Just Calling".

Pat Bianchi is more than a disciple of the great organ players we know of over the many years. He is a monster player and a unique creative master with a different approach. His own special talent combined with the experiences he derived from having worked with the incredible Pat Martino for many years has brought him to being one of the great voices of today on the Hammond B3 organ. Congratulations Pat on a great collection of Stevie Wonder songs! I think Stevie himself would appreciate this tribute to his incredible music.

– Monty Alexander

Generally there are two schools of thought when it comes to making a record. Some believe a recording is merely a snapshot of a series of moments captured in time, while others believe releasing a record is about making a statement of some kind. It could be artistic, musical or social. The list could go on and on. As I have reflected on the entire process of this project, I feel this record captures both elements I described above. The idea for this album was conceived and we went into the studio in the middle of the pandemic, which affected all of us in one way or another. It was a time I'm sure none of us will forget. At the same time as a musician I have "Something to Say" sharing my appreciation for this music and the instrument I play from my perspective.

On paper the idea of recording the music of Stevie Wonder seemed like a very easy thing to do. Great melodies, great chord changes, how difficult could it be? It would be a no brainer. But quickly, an internal struggle as well as musical challenges began to surface. I think we can all agree that Stevie Wonder's writing and performances, both live and recorded are brilliant masterpieces. Stevie's original recordings are perfect and for me to just rerecord them more or less like the original versions or for example, change the underlying groove of a song to be more "jazz like" just didn't feel right. So many tribute records in the past seem to use these formulae and consequently they never tugged at my heartstrings in quite the same way as other albums. I quickly realized I had a lot of work ahead of me.

After doing some research and checking out a lot of Stevie's catalog (spanning from the Motown era to his more recent recordings) I began to narrow down the songs I thought I might want to record, making an effort to choose material that would both be familiar as well as some lesser known songs of his. The process of carving out my interpretation of each song was a lot of fun. I have always enjoyed arranging, experimenting with alternate harmony (chord changes) in a song as well as orchestration (which instrument plays what parts). "Go Home" is a perfect example of these devices in motion. But there were other elements that made it feel like I was trying to solve a Rubik's cube for each song, of course with various degrees of difficulty.

It was important that I didn't lose the feel or vibe of the original song. One of the challenges I forced on myself was to try and stay as close as possible to the original tempo and also be in the ball park in terms of its groove with respect to the original version. I didn't want to swing a tune just for the sake of it, speed up or slow down a song because it was necessary for the "balance" of the recording. Aside from all the changes in harmony, additions or subtractions of solo sections or interludes or for example "Until You Come Back to Me" being played in 7/4, the melody of each song should still come across strong very near the same tempo as the original. The slight exception is "Just Callin'" which is an original melody of mine written over "I Just Called to Say I Love You." But even though the melody is different, the chords are altered slightly and the song is uptempo, you can still sing the melody of Stevie's song and it will fit. I admit, I wanted a burner on the record!

And while I'm at it, let me say thank you Byron, Paul and Wayne for your musicianship and friendship. I am grateful to each of you for being a part of this recording. Thank you Joe Donofrio for all you've done for me along the way. It's been quite a ride and I'm sure more adventures are just around the corner. Thank you Barney Fields (and everyone at Savant) for believing in me, your support means the world to me. Thank you to Chris Sulit and Dave Darlington for making everything sound so incredible on this recording. Thank you to my better half, Jenny. Without you and your unwavering support and patience, I don't know what I would do!! Thank you to all of my family: Barbara, Jeff, Allyson, Nick, Maria, Katie, Adam, Jim and Martha. I am grateful for the support. Thank you to Dave Limina at Berklee College of Music and Max Ghirardi at MAG Organs, I am very lucky to be a part of such great teams! Thank you Eli Windau and finally thank you to all my friends, fans and students who have been so supportive of me over the years!

– Pat Bianchi

PAT BIANCHI – ORGAN

PAUL BOLLENBACK – GUITAR

BYRON LANDHAM – DRUMS

guest artist

WAYNE ESCOFFERY

– TENOR SAXOPHONE (TRACKS 3 & 7)

Produced by **Joseph Donofrio**
Assistant Producer: **Pat Bianchi**
Recorded at Trading 8s Recording Studio, Paramus, New Jersey
on September 2 & 3, 2020
Recorded and Mixed by **Chris Sulit**
Mastered by **David Darlington**, Bass Hit Studio, New York, NY
Cover photo by **Luca Vantusso**, LKV Photo Agency, Milan, Italy
Photography / videography by **Christopher Brown**
Graphic Design by **İrem Ela Yıldızeli**

Wayne Escoffery appears courtesy of Smoke Sessions Records

Pat Bianchi plays and endorses the MAG Organ, Lounsberry Pedals and Bookerlab Audio

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